



## **Defense Health Agency (DHA) Clinical Communities Speaker Series**

### **2026 MAY CCSS Operation Ready Families: Strong Families, Strong Force**

#### **2026 MAY CCSS S05: Bridging Systems: Supporting Mental Health in Military Children Across School and Healthcare Settings**

##### **Resource List**

[Data and Statistics on Mental Health](#) (2025) provide the latest data on "flourishing" indicators and the long-term impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). For MHS pediatric providers, these data-driven insights are essential for screening military-connected children during routine wellness visits, especially following a Permanent Change of Station (PCS). These resources allow providers to identify early warning signs of academic and social withdrawal that may be exacerbated by the frequent loss of peer networks. MHS pediatricians can advocate more effectively for school-based accommodations, such as Section 504 plans or specialized counseling, ensuring that a child's developmental health is prioritized as a pillar of the overall "Total Force" readiness mission.

[Independent Analysis of Department of Defense's Comprehensive Autism Care Demonstration Program](#) (2025) provides high-level analysis and recommendations for improving specialized pediatric care within the MHS. This report is critically useful to MHS pediatric healthcare providers because it addresses the systemic barriers faced by families with Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) requirements when transitioning between different school districts and healthcare regions. This high-level research ensures that MHS providers are equipped with the latest policy recommendations to advocate for the stability and well-being of medically complex military youth.

The [Behavioral Health Resources for Youth](#), (2024) offers specific toolkits for integrating clinical care with school-based mental health services. These resources are indispensable to MHS pediatric healthcare providers as they provide a bridge between military treatment facilities (MTFs) and civilian educational environments where most military children are enrolled. Having access to these Health and Human Services-vetted resources empowers MHS providers to educate civilian school counselors on the unique "deployment cycle" stressors, facilitating a more supportive educational environment for their patients. This collaborative approach ensures that clinical treatment plans for anxiety or ADHD are reinforced by the school system, ultimately reducing the risk of academic failure and family instability.

The [World Mental Health Report: Transforming Mental Health for All](#) (2022) serves as a transformative framework for addressing the global burden of adolescent mental health, which is a vital consideration for the Military Health System given its global footprint. Pediatric healthcare providers in the MHS can utilize these international standards to develop trauma-informed care models that remain effective regardless of where a military family is stationed. These resources are particularly useful for MHS providers because they offer a standardized baseline for identifying psychological distress in children who must navigate diverse international school systems during OCONUS (outside the continental United States) assignments.



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### References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2025). Data and statistics on mental health. *US Department of Health & Human Services*. <https://www.cdc.gov/children-mental-health/data-research/index.html>

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM). (2025). Independent analysis of Department of Defense's Comprehensive Autism Care Demonstration Program. *The National Academies Press*. <https://www.nationalacademies.org/projects/DBASSE-BCYF-22-02>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2024). Behavioral health resources for youth. *US Department of Health and Human Services*. <https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/children-and-families/school-health/resources>

World Health Organization (WHO). (2022). World mental health report: Transforming mental health for all. *World Health Organization*. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049338>